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UbD and DI reflection

Chapter 1

Understanding by Design is the model that educators need because it acknowledges the core of standards. But also because it demonstrates how meaning and understanding can not only originate from, but also frame content standards so that students develop power of minds as well as gain an information base. Differentiated Instruction offers a framework for addressing learner variance as a critical element of instructional planning. Both of them together address two of the greatest contemporary challenges for teachers. The first of which is crafting a powerful curriculum in a standards dominated time period. The second greatest challenge is ensuring academic success for a full spectrum of learners that compose today’s schools. The partnership of the two models is essential where teachers aim to help each and every student to develop to their maximum capacity. Understanding by Design’s primary goal is to define and guide the application of principles of curriculum design. It is primarily a curriculum design model. Differentiated Instruction on the other hand, is primarily an instructional design model. Its primary goal is to ensure that teachers focus on the processes and procedures that provide effective learning for varied individuals. The big take away that I got from this chapter is that a quality classroom requires quality curriculum and quality instruction which is why Understanding by Design and Differentiated Instruction go together. It’s not enough for a teacher to teach in a way that satisfies a variety of learning styles if there isn’t a good curriculum. In the same way it is not enough for there to be a good curriculum if the teacher can’t help all individuals learn.

Chapter 2

Central to teaching is what we as teachers ought to teach, meaning what we want students to know, understand, and be able to do. The second element that is central to teaching is who we teach. The two elements that are central to teaching means that as a teacher students should be what I am thinking of first when I am make, implement, and reflect on my professional plans. I learned that students come to the classroom to make sense of the world and of their place in the world. They also come looking for affirmation, partnership, accomplishment, and freedom. Because students are looking for freedom, I learned that students are better learners when their way of learning is accepted. This is important for me to include in my classroom. By allowing students to have freedom and allowing them to learn in their own way, I can fulfill the needs of my students. I learned that it is a teacher’s job to make the link between the basic needs of students and the curriculum. By allowing students to learn the material in their own way, I am making the link between the curriculum and the students’ need of freedom. In this chapter I learned about responsive teaching and how it means that a teacher is attuned to a students varied learning needs as much as the requirements of the curriculum. Teachers can benefit more students by implementing patterns of instruction that serve multiple needs. One way I can do this in my classroom is by teaching in multiple ways and by giving students the option to work alone or work in pairs.

Chapter 3

In this chapter I learned about the backward design process. It says to first consider the big picture by considering goals, examining content standards, and reviewing curriculum expectations. The next thing to do is to narrow it down by considering in advance the assessment evidence that is needed to document the targeted learning has been achieved. The final step in the process is to completely narrow down what you are doing. In the last step, as the teacher you figure out what instructional activities are the most appropriate. The big thing that this design plan provides is the structure to support flexibility in teaching and assessments while honoring the integrity of the content but also respecting the individuality of the students learning processes. This impacts me in a big way. Since I will have to write lesson plans and the plan for a unit, I have a way of doing so that will first make sure that I have reached the content standards and curriculum expectations. Using this process I can look at the big picture first and then begin breaking the unit into parts. This process will make it easier to see where I am headed before I plan a lesson or unit instead of planning a lesson and not knowing where I am going with it or if it meets the curriculum or content standards. This method of making lesson plans will majorly impact my classroom because I can teach the curriculum and satisfy the standards while satisfying each student’s individual learning process and style.

Chapter 4

Some of the main points I got out of this chapter is that learning has more to do with a student’s ability to use skills to address problems than with retaining data. I also learned that to teach for understanding is to provide an intellectual diet that yields thoughtful, capable, and confident learners and therefore citizens. The book said “the more powerful the curriculum the greater the possibilities for the classroom, the teacher, and the students. One of the things that impacted me the most from this chapter is that in order to be an effective teacher, I must continually attend to the quality of the curriculum and instruction. This was discussed in Dr. Theresa’s class when we talked about PCK. The chapter introduced the idea that if a student isn’t growing then the teacher isn’t teaching that student. This statement will greatly impact my philosophy of teaching. I feel like a lot of teachers blame the students for not learning but the idea that is the teacher’s fault that the child isn’t growing will impact the individual attention that I give to the growth of my students. At the end of the chapter three questions were asked that will greatly impact me as a teacher and therefore my classroom. The three questions were: Do we have the will and skill to accept the responsibility for the diverse individuals we teach? Do we have a vision of the power of high-quality learning to help young people build lives? Are we willing to do the work of building bridges of possibility between what we teach and the diverse learners we teach? I feel I can be a good and responsive teacher if every day I can answer these three questions with a confident yes.

Chapter 5

I learned a couple of extremely important terms and ideas in this chapter. This chapter introduced three different types of knowledge and gave the definition for each one. The three types of knowledge are declarative, procedural, and dispositions. The three types of knowledge were listed as the three types of educational goals. I also learned about the three different types of assessment. The chapter gave the definition and examples for each one. The three different types of assessment are summative, diagnostic, and formative. I learned about the concept of GRASPS and what each letter stands for. Some of the big ideas that I got from the chapter talked about evidence. Three of the important messages that I got out of this chapter are: 1) reliable assessment demands multiple sources of evidence, 2) a variety of classroom assessments may be used to gather evidence of mastery, and most importantly 3) a single test at the end of instruction is less likely to provide a complete picture of a student’s learning than a collection of diverse sources of evidence is. I also learned about the important of feedback. The book says that feedback should be timely, specific, understandable, and should allow for adjustment. All of these concepts impacted me and they will all impact the way that I teach. Instead of giving a test at the end of a unit, I know now that it is best to give diagnostic assessments before I begin the unit, formative assessments during the unit, and then to give a summative assessment at the end of the unit.

UbD Chapter 4:

### Abstract

The main ideas in this chapter are proper class instruction, variance in teaching styles, and what makes up a successful teacher. In order to make sure that students can learn the material, the content must be clear. One of the biggest characteristics of a successful teacher is for the teacher to know the [needs](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/how-adapt-your-teaching-strategies-student-needs) of the each of their students. Determining readiness level and being able to adapt lessons, assignments, etc. for all readiness levels goes along with knowing the needs of your students.

**Synthesis**  
Most of the class talked about the importance of teachers knowing the needs of their students and about readiness level along with it. Being able to determine what level every student is on was one of the big ideas that most people got out of this chapter. The other big point that a lot of people talked about is the fact that education is a two-way street. As teachers we need to accept responsibility for our students' success. One thing that went along with this that was important to everyone was that as teachers we need to [care](http://teaching.monster.com/benefits/articles/10210-how-to-show-your-students-that-you-care-about-them) about our students. What makes this a two-way street is that not only do we need to be responsible and care, but students also need to care and take responsibility for their successes.